

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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R 230253Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2904
INFO USDOC WASHDC
AMCONSUL AUCKLAND
AMCONSUL SYDNEY
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
AMEMBASSY SUVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, NZ
SUBJECT: COMMERCIAL ACTION PROGRAM FOR NEW ZEALAND - FY 78

1. THE FOLLOWING COMMERCIAL ACTION PROGRAM FOR NEW ZEALAND FOR FY 1978 REPRESENTS THE JOINT EFFORT OF AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON AND AMCONSUL AUCKLAND.

2. THE FULL-TIME U.S. COMMERCIAL STAFF IN NEW ZEALAND CONSISTS OF ONE FSO, TWO PROFESSIONAL FSLs AND TWO CLERICAL FSLs. HOWEVER, OTHER MISSION OFFICERS ALSO PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN THE POSTS' COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS. THE BULK OF THE STAFF TIME AVAILABLE FOR COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES TRADITIONALLY HAS BEEN, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, TAKEN UP BY REACTIVE COMMERCIAL SERVICES - TRADE INQUIRIES AND TRADE VISITORS, ADS WTDRS, THE COMMERCIAL NEWSLETTER, ETC. HOWEVER, WE WOULD LIKE IN FY 78 TO INCREASE FIELD TRAVEL BY COMMERCIAL PERSONNEL, (IN PART DUE TO THE ARRIVAL OF NEW PERSONNEL), AND TO UNDERTAKE A NUMBER
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OF TRADE PROMOTION INITIATIVES. FOR THESE, WE WILL NEED SUPPORT FROM WASHINGTON AND, IN SOME CASES, FROM THE SYDNEY TRADE CENTER.

3. TRADE PROMOTION ACTIVITIES IN NEW ZEALAND WILL BE UNDERTAKEN WITHIN A CLIMATE WHICH IS NOT FAVORABLE TO INCREASING IMPORTS. HOWEVER, THE EMBASSY HAS EVERY

REASON TO ANTICIPATE A RETURN TO HEALTHIER ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OVER THE MEDIUM TERM, AND AN ACTIVE U.S. COMMERCIAL PROGRAM IN FY 78 WILL HELP U.S. SUPPLIERS TO "GET IN ON THE GROUND FLOOR". NEW ZEALAND HAS SUFFERED IN THE RECENT PAST, AND CONTINUES TO SUFFER, A SEVERE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT. IMPORTS OF A WIDE RANGE OF GOODS GENERALLY ENCOMPASSING ITEMS WHICH ARE BEING OR COULD BE MANUFACTURED BY NEW ZEALAND COMPANIES - ARE SUBJECT TO LICENSING, AND WHILE IN RECENT YEARS THE VALUE OF LICENSES ISSUED EACH YEAR GENERALLY HAS REMAINED LEVEL, THE VOLUME OF GOODS WHICH THAT VALUE REPRESENTS IS BEING WHITTLED AWAY BY CONTINUING INFLATION. IN ADDITION, IMPORTS OF SEVERAL CATEGORIES OF CONSUMER GOODS AND SOME CATEGORIES OF CAPITAL EQUIPMENT HAVE BEEN SUBJECT SINCE FEBRUARY 1976 TO A PRIOR DEPOSIT REQUIREMENT WHICH HAS THE EFFECT OF INCREASING STILL FURTHER THE COST OF BOTH OF IMPORTING SUCH GOODS. HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT IS ANXIOUS TO INCREASE THE COUNTRY'S EXPORT EARNINGS, AND THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE FOR THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES. AS A RESULT, WE BELIEVE THE BIGGEST PAYOFF IN OUR TRADE PROMOTION EFFORTS WILL COME IN PRODUCT LINES WHICH OFFER RELATIVELY SOPHISTICATED TECHNOLOGY APPLICABLE TO INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT IN SECTORS IN WHICH NEW ZEALAND HAS PRODUCTION CAPACITY. MORE AND BETTER EXPORTS, IN THE END, IS THE NAME OF THE GAME.

4. WE BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A NEED FOR IN-DEPTH MARKET UNCLASSIFIED

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RESEARCH IN NEW ZEALAND ALONG THE LINES OF A COUNTRY SECTORAL SURVEY, DESIGNED TO IDENTIFY THOSE PRODUCT CATEGORIES WHICH HAVE THE BEST PROSPECTS FOR INCREASING U.S. EXPORTS. SUCH A STUDY WOULD BE BEYOND THE CAPABILITIES OF OUR LIMITED STAFF, BUT COULD BE UNDERTAKEN BY A MARKET RESEARCH OFFICER FROM COMMERCE OR ON A CONTRACT BASIS. FY 78 IS THE IDEAL YEAR FOR SUCH A STUDY TO BE PERFORMED IN OUR VIEW, AS THERE SHOULD BE A SLOW AND STEADY EMERGENCE FROM THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN OF RECENT YEARS. WE WOULD HOPE TO BASE CAP ACTIVITIES IN THE COMING YEARS ON THE FINDINGS OF SUCH A STUDY.

5. WE ALSO HOPE THAT THE IN-STORE PROMOTION WITH THE UNITED STORES OF AUCKLAND, SHOULD IT NOT MATERIALIZE IN FY 77, WILL BE HELD IN FY 78. AMCONSUL AUCKLAND WILL BE REPORTING SEPARATELY ON THAT PROJECT TO COMMERCE.

6. AMTECH 78 IN MARCH WOULD BE THE BIGGEST SINGLE PROJECT WE HAVE IN MIND FOR FY 78. WELLINGTON 0566 (NOTAL) OUTLINED OUR THOUGHTS ON SUCH AN EVENT, AND STRESSED THE NECESSITY OF STRONG SUPPORT FROM THE SYDNEY TRADE CENTER STAFF. WE ARE DELIGHTED TO NOTE THAT THE TRADE CENTER SEEMS AS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT AMTECH AS WE ARE.

7. WE WOULD LIKE TO COMBINE WITH AMTECH THE INFO/SPEED DEMONSTRATION BEING PRESENTED BY USIA IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES IN THE NEAR AND FAR EAST AT THE PRESENT TIME. WE UNDERSTAND THAT CANBERRA HAS ALSO EXPRESSED SOME INTEREST IN INFO-SPEED, AND WE HOPE THAT PROGRAMMING FOR MARCH 1978 IN BOTH COUNTRIES WOULD BE CONVENIENT. REF WELLINGTON 0984 (NOTAL).

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8. FOOD PROCESSING AND PACKAGING EQUIPMENT OFFERS GOOD PROSPECTS IN NEW ZEALAND, AND WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A CATALOG SHOW ON THAT THEME IN MAY 1978.

9. A JEEP TO NEW ZEALAND IS ALREADY FORESEEN AS PART OF THE COMPUTERS AND RELATED EQUIPMENT EXHIBITION AT THE SYDNEY TRADE CENTER IN JUNE, 1978. WE ENTHUSIASTICALLY ENDORSE THIS PROPOSAL, AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE EVENT, WE FORESEE A VISIT TO ONE CITY OF ONE OR TWO DAYS DURATION.

10. ASSUMING THAT OUR PROPOSED EXPERIMENT WITH AN AGENT-SEEKING GROUP OF U.S. EXHIBITORS AT THE SYDNEY TRADE CENTER SECURITY AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT EXHIBITION IN JULY 1977 (REF WELLINGTON 1005), IS SUCCESSFUL, WE WOULD LIKE TO REPEAT THE TECHNIQUE WITH SYDNEY'S HEALTH CARE EQUIPMENT EXHIBITION, PRESENTLY SCHEDULED FOR JULY 1978. AGAIN, A GROUP OF FOUR TO SIX U.S. EXHIBITORS SEEKING AGENTS IN NEW ZEALAND WOULD BE INVITED TO ORGANIZE THEMSELVES TO VISIT THIS COUNTRY FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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ONE DAY OF BUSINESS CONSULTATIONS EN ROUTE TO SYDNEY.

1. DURING FY 78, WE HOPE TO SUBMIT A MINIMUM OF 60 QUALITY TOP REPORTS, CONCENTRATING TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE ON THOSE INDUSTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST POTENTIAL FOR U.S. SUPPLIERS TO NEW ZEALAND.

12. THE FOREGOING ACTIVITIES REPRESENT OUR BEST JUDGEMENT OF WHAT WE CAN HANDLE WITH PRESENT STAFFING LEVELS. SHOULD WE LOSE ALTOGETHER, OR EVEN SUFFER A LENGTHY VACANCY IN, EVEN ONE POSITION, WE DOUBT VERY MUCH THAT WE COULD HANDLE ALL OF THE TRADE PROMOTION INITIATIVES SPECIFIED PARAS 5 THROUGH 11 ABOVE. SHOULD ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL BECOME AVAILABLE, THEY COULD BE PRODUCTIVELY USED FOR ADDITIONAL INITIATIVES IN SUCH AREAS AS LABORATORY, SCIENTIFIC AND ENGINEERING INSTRUMENTATION (SEPARATE FROM AMTECH 78), COMMERCIAL FISHING EQUIPMENT (A FOLLOW-UP TO THE APRIL 1977 CATALOG SHOW ON THIS THEME), AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE PLASTICS INDUSTRY. UNDER PRESENT STAFFING CONDITIONS, HOWEVER, WE PREFER TO DO A FEW THINGS WELL THAN MANY THINGS POORLY.

13. FOR EACH OF THESE ACTIVITIES, WE WILL NEED THE SUPPORT OF COMMERCE. FOR SOME. WE WILL ALSO REQUIRE ASSISTANCE FROM THE SYDNEY TRADE CENTER AND USIA. WE LOOK FORWARD TO EARLY INDICATIONS OF THE PROBABILITIES OF RECEIVING SUCH SUPPORT IN ORDER TO FACILITATE OUR RESOURCE PLANNING. SELDEN

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